

town, County Kilkenny, and have advertised for tenders for same. The plans were prepared by their architect, Mr. Wilkinson.

Several mascons are employed in fencing the timber breakwater along the strand at Pilmore, which forms a concave facing the south and east. There are twenty-seven of these structures, at intervals. The works have scarcely any foundation, the stones being merely laid on the sand: the wooden piling outside them is sunk some depth.

The Waterford and Limerick Railway Company are about borrowing on mortgage or bonds a sum necessary for carrying on the works, not exceeding 250,000*l*. The Public Loan Commissioners would advance 120,000*l*. on certain conditions. This company has agreed to the terms of the Exchequer Loan Office, and has entered into an agreement with the Waterford and Kilkenny Company to have the joint use of the station at Waterford, by paying 5 per cent. interest upon one-half of the outlay expended thereon.

A meeting was held lately in Killarney for the purpose of urging Government to come forward and complete the line from Killarney to Mallow, a portion of it having been constructed.

NEGLECT OF ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUITIES IN IRELAND.

It is melancholy to see the ruin and devastation of mediæval remains in Ireland, once so numerous scattered over the face of the island. Scores of them have sunk to a mass of rubbish which have never been illustrated, and which have contained details of remarkable beauty and singularity. Much has been done in England to preserve such memorials, but here they have been left a prey to vulgar ignorance or sordid cupidity: the unlettered peasant, the ignorant squire, or heartless road-jobber have been permitted to deface, rob, and ruin our most interesting relics: the consequence is, they are fast disappearing from the land; and if the hand of the patriot or the antiquary be not stretched forth to save them, a short period will see the ploughshare driven over many of the few that yet remain.

I have seen a modern tomb built almost entirely from the carved bones and capitals of the cloister columns: I have seen another constructed of monumental slabs, covered with quaint inscriptions and antique crosses, many of them broken to make them fit in their place.

Lately visiting the ruined abbey of O'Dorney, in Kerry, I gazed with dismay upon a few mutilated carvings, the relics of what, half a dozen years ago, had been a beautifully-carved altar tomb: on inquiry I found it had been pulled to pieces to make head-stones for graves,—also that a village mascon had taken away a portion, which he had converted into a chimney-piece.

Not far from O'Dorney is Batoon, where formerly stood extensive monastic foundations containing seven churches: a ruined chantry, and a beautiful round tower (perhaps one of the most elegant specimens we have in existence), are all that remain at present.

I cannot here pass by the present ruins and neglected state of the once glorious cathedral of Ardfoort: the arches of the lofty and graceful triplet in the east gable are tumbling in; and the south wall, having separated from the east gable, is fast tending to a fall, and will involve in its ruin the beautiful arcade of ten lancets with their slender shafts, and trefoiled heads, and the elegant remains of its sedilia and piscina. I was informed in the village that the late Bishop of Limerick had collected funds towards its reparation: I hope his successor will not lose sight of the matter.

A few weeks since I visited Buttevant abbey in company with our worthy fellow-townsmen and indefatigable antiquary, Mr. Windle. While pointing out to him its ruinous condition, and the immenely dangerous state of one portion of the abbey, he said, "Well, if you will superintend the reparations, I will try and collect the funds." To this I gladly assented. Mr. Windle, with great perseverance, and at considerable personal trouble, has succeeded in raising a sum which, with a handsome donation from the worthy parish priest of Buttevant, will enable me to make such reparations as will preserve it from the ruin which now threatens it. I mention this instance

to show what may be done by private exertion towards preserving our national monuments: they are sacred legacies bequeathed to us by the holy and self-sacrificing spirits of by-gone days: let us, then, guard with jealous care those decaying memorials of our country's vanished greatness, and may it be our pleasure and our pride to hand them down to posterity with the tokens of our zeal and veneration palpably stamped upon them in careful and judicious reparations.

R. R. B.

THE ARTISTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF OUR COSTUME.

THE following declaration is now in course of signature:—

We, the undersigned artists, amateurs, and admirers of the fine arts, and of all that conduces to elevation of style in painting and sculpture, particularly as connected with truthful representations of contemporaneous actions and characters of this eventful era, considering that whatever contributes to the proper display of the human figure, not only on canvass or in marble, but in daily life and action, is essential to the advancement of public taste and of high art, conceive that the influence of the connoisseurs, and the influential of all civilized nations, at the Exhibition to take place in Hyde Park in 1851, will afford an unprecedented opportunity for discussing the general adoption of any improvement that may by them be deemed conducive to these ends.

Are therefore anxious to draw general attention to the subject of costume; that which is now prevalent in Europe being devoid of all the requisites for dignified historic painting, utterly incongruous with sculpture, and on less unfavourable to the living figure, both as regards appearance and convenience.

Not to dwell on serious evils in regard to health and comfort, arising from deficiency of ready adaptability to the hourly variations of weather, it is remarkable, at this period of advancing taste in architecture, furniture, and decoration of every inanimate object, that little regard is paid to a suitable prevalence. No costume of which there are any traces was ever so inconsistent with grace, simplicity, and dignity of aspect, none so uselessly complicated, as an European's of the present day. The unity of the figure is frittered away. Stiff lines and angles disguise the body, and an uncouth hat crowns the disfigurement. Groups of men in the ordinary garb gratify no taste but that of caricature: neither painting nor sculpture can advantageously transmit to futurity a faithful representation of any event constituted of such a group. Nor does admixture of female fashions often obviate the difficulty. Family groups of the present date have seldom any charm beyond the kindred circle. To expect from art truthful representations of events in which our contemporaries are engaged in their usual habits is to expect madness of aspect to express all that is noble. Interesting as such faithful painting and sculpture would certainly be to posterity, they must remain unattempted until dress displays the flowing lines and harmonious colours in which nature and art delight. Historical subjects must continue to be sought in remote periods, and to exemplify chiefly the imagination of the artist: genuine scenes of great interest will remain unknown in this high department of art.

The cause of truth—the interests of our own times—and the satisfaction of posterity—alike require the removal of such an impediment to artistic faithfulness.

We, therefore, invite from all countries examples of the best style of dress, both male and female, combining dignity, simplicity, elegance, comfort, and convenience, with a special regard to artistic representation, and to the employment of the various fabrics now in use, or that can be introduced.

Let it not be supposed that any sudden or extravagant departure from existing modes is requisite, nor fired forms precluding the display of individual taste and fancy; still less any sumptuary regulation. What we suggest to designers and makers of every article of dress is, in availing themselves of the decisions published by her Majesty's Commissioners as to some of the objects which may be admitted to the Exhibition under section 3, viz. "hats" and "garments"—and under section 4,

"models" in any kind of material" (the conditions being that they shall exhibit "increased usefulness or improved forms,"—"beauty of design"—and "such a degree of taste as to come under the denomination of fine art,") to exhibit at the approaching most favourable opportunity such forms as may afford a series of transitional changes (to which the public already evince a decided tendency) from the present fashion to a style consistent with the foregoing views and the advanced tastes of the age.

We further express our hope that every European Court may concur in the adoption of a costume possessing the advantages we have enumerated, and capable of being modified in accordance with the seasons, the climate, and the circumstances of each country.

Signed—E. H. Bailey, R.A.; H. W. Pickers, R.A.; J. P. Knight, R.A.; C. R. Leslie, R.A.; C. Landseer, R.A.; D. Roberts, R.A.; Ab. Cooper, R.A.; P. MacDowell, R.A.; R. Thorburn, R.A.; W. C. Ross, R.A.; W. F. Withington, R.A.; J. Hollins, A.R.A.; J. D. Harding, R.R. Reinagle, R. Westmacott, R.A.; John Wilson, W. Calder Marshall, A.R.A.; Geo. Gidern, Wm. H. Davis, A. J. Stothard, C. W. Cope, R.A.; W. J. Donthorn, G. R. Ward, Tom Taylor, R. Rawlinson, C.E.; T. H. Moody; T. Y. Hurlstone; E. Havill, jun.; Ambrani Jérôme; Fra. Graham Moon (aid.); H. T. Ryall; Leonard Lewis; Cornelius Durham; W. Gale; T. Clater, &c. &c.

THE METROPOLITAN COMMITTEES FOR THE '51 EXHIBITION.

IN accordance with suggestions from the Royal Commissioners, it has been determined by an aggregate meeting of the local commissioners to consider the metropolis henceforth as a "unity," so far as regards the allotment of space to exhibitors, and to divide the local commissioners, without further regard to districts, into committees of specialities. This was obviously the only course to be pursued. There are nearly 300 local commissioners; so that thirty committees of, say ten each, for thirty classes of subjects, would include them all. Each committee is to appoint a chairman and deputy chairman. The committee are to have the selection and rejection of articles, with an appeal, in case of dispute, to the whole of the chairmen of the committees.

A classification of the local commissioners was sent from head-quarters, and has since been altered by the City committee, in opposition, it would seem, to the Westminster committee. Antagonism must be avoided;—all must pull together.

We do not think either list would be quite satisfactory,—the amended list least so. In making the classification, it seemed natural to put under each head those who knew most about that particular matter. In practice, however, this will not work well. Take, for example, class xvi. in the amended list, "Working in Precious Metals, &c.": the committee named are Mr. Garrard, Mr. Gray, Mr. J. Hunt, and Mr. Oram, all men acquainted, technically, with the subject; but then they will probably all be exhibitors of the same sort of work, and are the rivals, or at all events will be regarded as such by other candidates for space. For papier maché, under class "Decorative," only Mr. Bettbridge is named, and for paper-hangings Messrs. Clarke, Haselden, Horne, Hubert, and Simpson, all, if we mistake not, manufacturers and intending exhibitors. The names must be shuffled about a bit, or the "committee of appeal" will have a great deal to do. With good feeling and earnest desire to reconcile differences, however, all the difficulties may be overcome. The committees, be they formed as they may, will have to work, and must prepare to be abused.

A GREAT GLOBE is in course of construction by Mr. Wyld. It will be 56 feet in diameter, and framed on zinc ribs, each circle in four compartments, socketed together with copper. The surface will represent in relief the natural mountains, elevations, and streams. It will contain galleries and staircase for visitors. It has been stated that it will be put up in the Hyde-park buildings, but this will not be the case. A negotiation is on foot to obtain the area of Leicester-square for its erection.